

Shapiro's new vision

Principal offers 'alternative futures' for McGill in new report

by Sonia Verma

Principal Bernard Shapiro is reporting back to the Board of Governors today with a summary of members' discussion on budgetary options facing the university, including a radical proposal to privatize McGill by raising tuition fees to \$10,000 and slashing enrollment.

The summary serves as a follow-up to November's joint Board-Senate meeting where Shapiro's Principal's Report sparked debate over McGill's fiscal future. Shapiro presented four options in an attempt to wrestle with McGill's accumulated operating deficit of over \$60 million, while generating revenue in the face of a province-wide tuition freeze. Over the past five years the university has been hit with a 20 per cent erosion of provincial grants which makes up roughly 80 per cent of McGill's budget.

According to Shapiro, grants are expected to shrink even further - \$20 million in the next two years - as federal transfer payments drop, threatening the academic integrity of the university. However, some students see a

greater threat: with the option of privatization on the table, public, accessible education could be jeopardized.

The idea was to create a context to stimulate discussion of alternative futures for the university, Shapiro explained. These are only four of many options and I don't have them in rank order, he said.



Shapiro: "stimulating discussion of alternative futures"

The first Cut-Drive option, reduces expenses by allowing staff, professors and student resources to erode away, with no mention of changing tuition fees or enrollment.

The Growth-Driven scenario lowers admission standards and spreads resources more thinly

across a larger student population. Although not explicitly chosen, Shapiro writes, this does...appear in retrospect to be the strategy that McGill has substantially used in recent years.

These two prospects, however, have been sidelined as controversy has become increasingly focused on the final two options: A Quality-Driven scenario which increases revenue through raising tuition to \$3,200 and fundraising in the private sector and a Radical Alternative of privatization where 5,000 students would pay \$10,000 a year to attend a privately funded university.

The advantages are very clear, explains Dean and Vice-Principal of Research and Graduate Studies, Pierre Belanger. It gets you away from the government's funding who can turn the tap on and off at will.

Shapiro contends that at present, the privatization option would prove untenable at McGill. The notion itself could be imagined. The question is, is it suitable or is it possible, he commented. My sense is that it would be too much of a break from the status quo. He is also skeptical that the provincial government would lift the current tuition freeze.

A prior proposal to privatize McGill was roundly criticized when it was first introduced by Shapiro in September 1995, when he released *Towards A New*

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SSMU endorses CASA's national debt day

But it's not enough, critics say

by Ben Hardy

In an effort to raise awareness about the rising student debt, the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) has declared next Monday, February 2, National Student Debt Day. On Thursday, the SSMU Council unanimously approved a motion endorsing the campaign. VP External Lisa Phipps, who made the motion, stated that the campaign will make people aware of national student debt. SSMU President Tara Newell added, It's a very important issue.

This action comes in the face of rising tuition costs and continued cuts to government aid to students, which have led to a dramatic increase in student borrowing.

However, in spite of the motion's unanimity, some feel that CASA's proposals do not go far enough. Law counselor Mario Nigro commented, It sounds good, it looks good, but it's a lot of smoke and mirrors.

CASA President Hoops Harrison explained that the National Student Debt Day has three main goals. It's designed to mobilize support, it's designed to create awareness, and to demonstrate support in the form of a petition.

According to a document published on CASA's web site, The costs of post-secondary are rising. The debt load of post-secondary students upon graduation has reached unprecedented levels, at

a projected figure in excess of \$25,000 for graduates in 1998. Many recent studies have focused upon the debt burdens of students. Their findings reveal the necessity for reform to the Canada Student Loan Program.

CASA advocates reform of the CSLP, as well as other measures such as a new loan repayment scheme, tax breaks for tuition and interest on loans, increased grants, work study programs, and a National Education Act. Key points of the proposed National Education Act would include a portion of the CHST targeted specifically for post secondary education, setting national goals for participation rates and accessibility to education, the timely harmonization of provincial and national loans, inter-provincial mobility of students, both academically and financially and the establishment of a standard level of tuition that is regionally and nationally equitable.

According to Harrison, National Student Debt Day activities at McGill will include rallies, a macaroni cookoff, and a \$1000 tuition credit giveaway. These actions are designed not only to draw the attention of politicians and administrators, but also of students themselves, who Harrison says are not always aware of what they're getting themselves into financially.

SSMU reforms election by-laws

Changes will reduce litter and cost of student elections

by Tamara Kochar

The long awaited changes to SSMU's election regulations finally saw the light of day at Thursday's Council meeting.

The Constitutional and Policy Review Committee (CPRC) a sub-committee of the President's portfolio scrutinized the campaigning regulations. It has been on the committee's agenda for the last six months. Last year's Elections Coordinator and Chair of the CPRC, Chris Muldoon presented the proposed changes to Council.

It is an experiment and this will be a transition year. We are trying to make radical changes, said President Tara Newell.

One of the major changes for future SSMU candidates regards financing. While candidates last year were allowed to spend up to a maximum of \$300, this year candidates will be permitted spend-

ing of only \$150.

It puts an emphasis on quality not quantity. This will encourage for the money to be used for more creative purposes without allowing candidates to go overboard, said Newell.

There will also be a limit to the number of posters that candidates are allowed to print. While Muldoon proposed restricting candidates to 2000 posters, Council eventually reduced the limit to 1000. As of last year there was no limit on how many posters could be printed. The main complaint (as elections coordinator), received last year was the total amount of paper being wasted. It overflowed. There was more paper used than space allowed for in classrooms and bulletin boards could handle, said Muldoon.

The changes also allow for the

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Differential tuition fees to be ruled on by judge

But timeline on decision still uncertain

by Jason Chow

Student grievances over differential tuition fees have finally been heard in court.

The preliminary hearing for SSMU's lawsuit against the province and the university took place on December 2 and 3. The judge has up to six months to come to a ruling.

SSMU President Tara Newell could not predict exactly when a ruling would be made. We have no idea when he'll render a decision, she said.

Newell was insistent on the student cause, resolving to fight until the courts turn in their favour. If we lose, we'll immediately appeal, vowed Newell. She added

that SSMU would pursue the case to the Supreme Court in the event of an appeal.

In the event of a ruling in favour of SSMU, the Students Society would immediately file for an injunction to force the province to refund the differential fees.

Optimistic, Newell believed that the authorities were sympathetic to the Students' case: I think the judge was favourable to our cause.

Paul Ruel, the name plaintiff for the SSMU team, agreed, citing the judge's dismissal of part of the province's defense as inappropriate as evidence of the judge's understanding of the SSMU position.

The province argued that the tuition policy was a necessary political decision. However, the judge responded that such an argument was irrelevant. Rather, he focused the case on two issues: whether or not the Minister of Education has the authority to make the decision and whether or not such a policy is discriminating.

The issue concerning differential tuition fees has attracted the attention of many. The Minister of Justice Allan Rock and other MPs have expressed much interest in the issue. However, the fragile state of federal-provincial relations has made federal intervention difficult.

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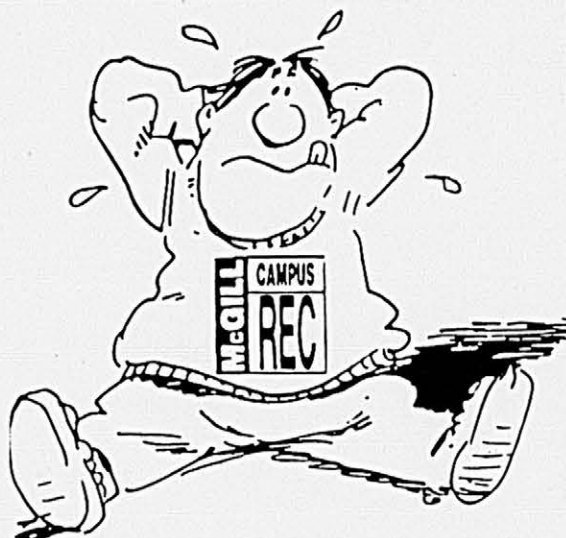
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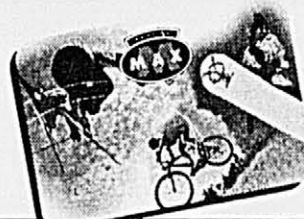
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Have we Learned From the Ice Storm Can We?

Comment

by Brian Sarwer-Foner

Now, two weeks after the ice storm wreaked havoc in the area, we are still busy with recovering from its aftermath. The focus of all the media is on how people are coping and dealing with this crisis situation. Questions are also being asked, for instance, how prepared was Hydro Quebec for this emergency, but we are tending to avoid the bigger issues, and to not look at the links between this natural catastrophe and our own behaviour.

The storm is being blamed on El Niño, but seeing as this warm air system usually does not have a major influence on weather in this part of the world, its current amplified effect is likely due to a larger scale problem. The fact that enormous warm air masses were hovering over our region during the coldest month of the year

might serve as evidence that we are experiencing the effects of global warming here and now, one would think.

Sure, it is possible that this was just an unusual irregularity in the weather cycle, or that as we approach the end of the millennium, the chaotic forces of the oft-prophesied apocalypse were flexing their muscles, warming up for a really good show in two years time.

But seriously, most scientists do agree that global climate change is very real. Even politicians around the world are recognizing the threat - they just signed a major international agreement on the subject in Kyoto, in December 1997.

If we look at all the natural weather related catastrophes around the world, including here

in Canada (the Saguenay and Manitoba floods, and now the ice storm), it is clear that there are many more of them of late. It is in no way unreasonable to consider these calamities, coupled with the instability of the weather and the chaotic patterns it has been following (drastic fluctuations of temperatures from one day to the next; spring thawing in the middle of winter for the last couple of years, followed by a clouded over winter-like spring last year; and again, the warm weather responsible for the ice storm, followed by chilling cold), as evidence for climate change.

The writing is on the walls folks; what's it going to take for us to wake up and take this seriously?

What causes global warming? The answer - the release of greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere

due to humans burning enormous amounts of fossil fuels. Although most of our electricity in Quebec is generated through hydro power, most in the world is still produced in fossil fuel burning power stations. Isn't it ironic that the major impact on us humans from the ice storm was the loss of electricity?

When looking at the way our society is organized, it is abundantly clear that we are utterly dependent on electricity for society's functioning. The ice storm aftermath has proven this. Why is it then, that we leave ourselves vulnerable, dependent on all our electricity from one source, being transported from far away, and controlled by one corporate megagiant? The answer is, because this is the modus operandi of our world today. Power is in the con-

trol of the big corporations, and it is they who dictate how it is that we structure and arrange ourselves. In Quebec, power is, quite literally, controlled by Hydro.

We could have weathered the storm much more easily if electricity were not controlled by a monopoly, and we had choices in our suppliers and sources. We could be getting our electricity from the sun and the wind. Solar panels on our roofs could power the fans for our furnaces and heat our water. If we weren't all dependent on one source, we could share electricity from the other systems when one is damaged or goes out. Hydro Quebec is a public utility, and if we lived in a truly democratic society, its policies and mandate should be able to be influenced, if not entirely determined by the needs and demands of Quebec citizens.

But we are stuck, at least for the moment, with the way things are now. So what can we do to help or change? Short of demanding that Hydro's structure be changed to allow energy from diversified and alternative sources to be incorporated into its grid, the obvious answer is to conserve!

We were asked by Hydro and our political leaders to power down as much as possible during this crisis, in order to lessen the strain on Hydro's weakened system. This was good, but why don't we try to conserve beyond the ice storm's aftermath? After all, if our energy consumption habits are the main cause of global warming, which indeed they are, shouldn't we make an earnest effort to change our behaviour?

Many of us in the Montreal area took this to heart, at least during the precarious period of limited electricity, and curbed our energy use to help Hydro, and to be in solidarity with those who were still without.

What is sickening, however, is those who don't give a damn. There were many businesses who kept their signs illuminated and indeed their indoor lights blaring, when they were closed at night. This is not only selfish, careless, and stupid, it is criminal. Or at least it should be so considered, not only now during this emergency, but into the future as part of a new environmentally enlightened way of living that we develop, with

strict enforceable laws in place to protect us against energy offenders.

Action for Educational Rights Hyde Park

In 1993, by promising a drastic change in government policy, Liberal propaganda was helpful to come to power. We know their record of breaking promises, one after another. Canadians never imagined that such liberal policy meant shooting themselves in the foot. Unemployment is increasing and the government has failed to provide any hope in the near future, and yet, this neoliberal government is proud of their record. The numbers of homeless and jobless are increasing exponentially and are prominent features of our daily lives, and still we have to believe that we are doing fine!

Canadians neither voted to have their student activists assaulted with pepper-spray nor to have our tax dollars given to multinational corporations. These foreign companies are coming to our backyard and are dictating our social policy. Our print-media and air-waves are continuously being taken over by others who have very little respect for our heritage and culture. The same situation is prevalent in our educational in-

stitutions. Tuition fees are ever-increasing, whereas the standard of life of a Canadian student is the lowest of all the G-7 countries. Kraft (or if you like to call it dinner!) is becoming the daily meal, student debts are a given and will be present for the rest of their lives following graduation. With increasing funding cuts to post-secondary education, increasing corporatization and privatization of campuses, use of public funded institutions for corporate free-rides, and renewed interest in government income-contingent loan repayment schemes (ICLRP), we need to fight and resist the very disturbing and destructive behaviour of the Liberal government.

There is no alternative. Education is a right, not a privilege. We have to fight for our rights. That's why students across Canada are mobilizing for a national DAY OF ACTION on Wednesday January 28, 1998. Due to the disruption caused by the storm of the century, Post-Graduate Student Society (PGSS) of McGill University, CFS-Quebec component and other

anti-poverty and anti-neoliberal groups have decided to change the day in the province of Quebec. We have chosen February 11, 1998, as the DAY OF ACTION in Quebec. I urge all of you to stand against these cuts, to government spending in Education, Health and Social programs, to ICLR schemes and to corporatization of campuses. To make this day successful, your participation and involvement is needed more than ever. Please call the McGill Action Committee, or drop by the office listed below.

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Comment

Team Canada under FIRE

by Jeff Webber

What is a "modern" social democrat? A Liberal. Another Team Canada trade and investment mission commences and Canada's two NDP premiers are 100% for this year's round of exploitation.

In recent years Canada has sent their business leviathan, known as Team Canada, to countries throughout Asia which have some of the most abominable human rights records and politically oppressive regimes in the world today.

Continuing with their theme of trade liberalization at all costs, the present Liberal government hosted the well renowned APEC conference in Vancouver in November of 1997, where many of the world's tyrannical leaders—such as China's President Jiang Zemin, who has defended the legitimacy of the Tiananmen Square massacre, and

Suharto of Indonesia who came to power through a military coup in 1965, and where the military wields massive excesses of power over the people and press—were embraced in the loving, money-hungry arms of Jean Chrétien and his business counterparts. Despite widespread public objection, the Liberals managed to continue diligently in their agenda, keeping protest to an absolute minimum with the help of Vancouver's pepper-spray wielding police force.

This year Team Canada visited Latin America, and though it is unquestionably a frightening prospect that the Canadian government is taking its business affiliates and heading way South it is to be expected under the present leadership.

What is more disconcerting,

however, is that Glen Clark and Roy Romanow, the NDP premiers of B.C. and Saskatchewan respectively, are following not on the Liberals' heels, but in fact, hand in hand. Granted, the two NDP premiers attended the previous Team Canada missions, but I still feel it is relevant in this scenario to ask again, why? Why do these two self-proclaimed social democrats deem it permissible to perpetuate the human rights violations occurring in Latin America, through the exploitation of cheap labour—among the other innumerable repressive variants of the southern region—for the purpose of furthering trade and investments.

Glen Clark was quoted recently in *The Globe And Mail* stating, "It's a very tricky balance. You cannot have a trade mission and bring 500

business people down here under the auspices of trade and that is the reason you are getting the meeting and then talk only about social issues. When you are in another country, you can't go attacking them on their human-rights records, or you'll never be invited back." At the same time, Clark and Romanow reportedly balk at the Liberals exclusive focus on trade liberalization.

It takes me back to the surreal APEC conference in Vancouver where protesters were provided a designated space by the federal government, to do their protesting. You can yell and yell, but it is meaningless because you're too far away from the epicentre.

Clark and Romanow protest human rights only from distant, designated confines. The difference, though, is that these confines are

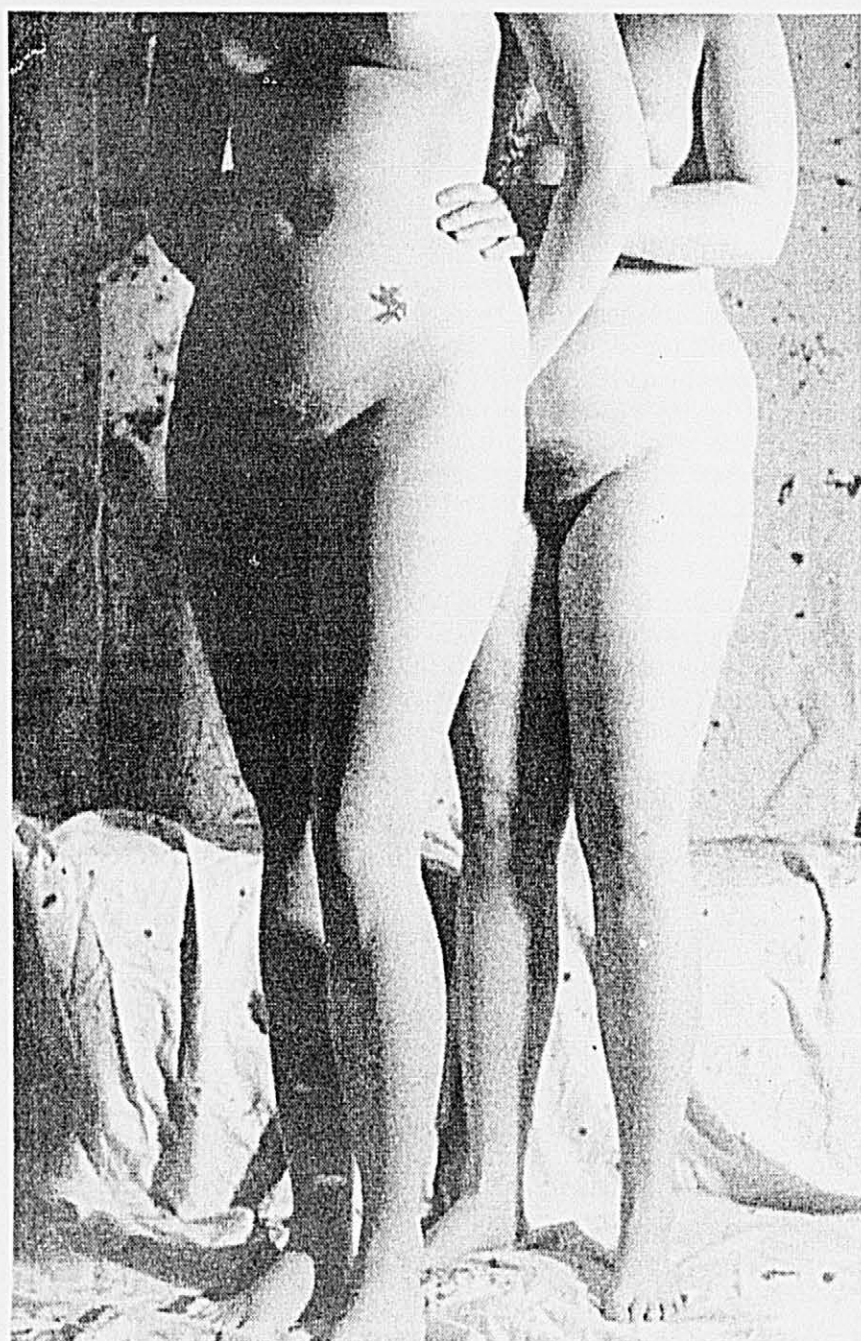
not a ruthless imposition of the federal government as in the case of APEC protesters, but a self-regulated act of free will.

Romanow and Clark express their concerns about human rights while they are in Canada addressing the public. So do the Liberals. We are all capable of yelling when it has no real implications.

Now it is time for Team Canada's mission to Latin America. A time for the NDP to act on their rhetoric of human rights. They have failed. Under the guise of "modern" social democracy, the premiers say they do not have a choice but to participate in this poignant example of the detriments of globalization. There is a choice. They have simply chosen the wrong one.

What exactly is a "modern" social democrat? A Liberal.

BORDERS CLOSED



Citizenship denied on basis of sexual orientation

by Alex Halperin

"It's no longer a love story, it's an immigration story," snickered a cynical onlooker at the press conference. The case was hailed as a first in North America. It involves Mexican dance studio owner Manuel Gambon and his right to immigrate to Canada in order to marry his same sex fiancé Martin Dubé in the face of a hostile, homophobic, Canadian government. The only North American precedent was Hawaii, where same-sex marriage was famously permitted and then revoked.

The Canadian civil code enacted in 1994 stultifying privileges to opposite sex couples is the primary barrier preventing the civil marriage which would entitle Dubé and Gambon to be legally recognized as a

married heterosexual couple. As demonstrated when Dubé's attorney Stephane Gendron said his client needed to be involved in a legal marriage in order to reap all the benefits of fiscal law and government programs pertaining to legally married couples, the proposed marriage has a touch of pragmatism. Otherwise, Gambon could be brought to Québec to be with Dubé under the Same Sex Sponsorship Program. This route will not be undertaken until all legal channels have failed, as the couple would not be legally married and Gambon's arrival could take upwards of a year.

Dubé says he will appeal his case in two weeks should his initial January 7th plea against the Canadian civil code fail.

Gendron is skeptical about his client's chances in both cases. Even though same sex marriage is legal in Québec, he accused the PQ government of being hypocrites as they supported his client in private but did not come out for Dubé in pub-

lic. The board, elected in 1994, has "not fulfilled their responsibility to the gay community," says the lawyer, and further claims that they had done nothing to promote the interests and civil liberties of the Québécois gay community.

He said, as an example, that if he, as a straight man, fell in love on a trip to France he would be able to bring the woman to Canada without an ordeal. "[It is a right] so common to straight people that gay people deserve it too," Gendron claims to be "fighting for all people of Québec."

"These things start small, like Dr. Martin Luther King's bus boycott" says Gendron though he was quick to add that he was not comparing himself to Dr. King.

Dubé did not have any delusions about changing history, "When you're in love with someone, you want to be with them," he states. And in order that he be with Gambon he is willing to "fight it to the end."

Into the mouth of the Fraser Day In The Life

by Dale Lum

VANCOUVER (CUP) – With a look of self-satisfaction, Michael Walker, executive director of the Fraser Institute, leans casually into his seat and twiddles the rubber band stretched between his fingers. The lecture hall in the conference centre is occupied by about 100 students who are listening to Douglas West, an economics professor at the University of Alberta, give a spirit-crushingly dull lecture titled, "250 Brands of Beer on the Wall: Privatized Liquor Retailing in Alberta." West is nearing the end of his talk when, from the back rows, Walker suddenly speaks and everybody in the lecture hall turns to listen. "Doug, is there any reason, then, for government to be in the distribution of alcohol at

all?" he asks brightly.

West pauses rhetorically, then says, "I, uh – no." Laughter rises from the audience, then he adds, "I don't see a reason." Walker smiles, as if a wink has been exchanged, invisibly, between the two men.

Walker has reason to be smug. He is the executive director of a think tank whose ideas were once perceived as right-wing fringe but have now taken centre stage in the arena of political thought.

Since the founding of the institute in 1974, its platform of less government control in the marketplace, cutting social spending and taxes and dismantling trade unions has become a strong reference point for successive governments and a subject of interest in the national media. The popularization of the Institute's ideas, once thought too extreme to

warrant serious attention, has partly been the result of careful image control. Its publications assert that it is non-political, stating that "it does not support any political party, nor engage in any lobbying activity."

Over the next few months, the Fraser Institute is staging student seminars on public policy issues in eight Canadian cities. The forums are dedicated to expanding the Institute's student following. Last month the Fraser roadshow came to Vancouver, and there was the distinct sound of one hand – the right hand – doing all

the clapping.

9:15 a.m.

The morning's first presentation is given by Laura Jones, an environmental economist at the Fraser Institute. The audience is prepared for her 20-minute lecture on global warming, having had the "preparatory reading material" mailed to them earlier in the week. This is comprised of two Globe and Mail columns by Terence Corcoran titled "Climate: Where's the Science?" and "Do Nothing in Kyoto," in reference to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in Japan. They espouse the Fraser Institute's position that since scientists cannot conclusively prove global warming, Canada should not harm its economy by reducing fossil fuel consumption in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Jones' talk is followed by a short question-and-answer period. One man asks why the view that global warming is bad for the environment has become so widely accepted in society. Jones blames politicians, bureaucrats who wish to "expand their regulatory empires," the media, and, of course, environmentalists.

"I think there are a lot of environmentalists who would like to see Canada and other developed countries reduce their carbon dioxide emissions because it is an attack on economic growth, and many environmentalists feel that economic growth causes environmental degradation," she said.

10:30 a.m.

The next lecturer is Helen Raham, executive director of the Society for the Advancement of Excellence in Education, a think-tank on public education issues. The topic is "Charter Schools: Problem or Solution?"

although it would be more accurately titled, "Charter Schools: Solution!"

Raham's lecture is high on rhetoric and low on argument. She spends the first half describing why charter schools are needed, neglecting to even give

a definition of exactly what they are. From her talk on charter schools, which would operate outside the public education system and be governed by a locally elected body of teachers, parents and community members, emerged a discussion about public versus private education.

1:00 p.m.

One of the day's more interesting moments comes in the discussion group following Michael Walker's lecture, "What Should the Government do with the Upcoming Fiscal Dividend?" In his speech, Walker espouses the ideas that big government is bad, smaller government is better, taxes are evil, and social services such as employment insurance are "not a social benefit, [they are] a social disease."

In the discussion, a disagreement arises between Victor Finberg, a physics student at Simon Fraser University, and John Weintraub. Finberg uses the example of slave wages paid by corporations to overseas workers as a rebuttal to the idea that corporations and the free market are inherently good.

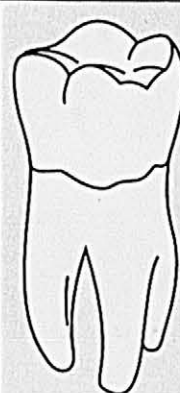
"Now the reason they are able to pay [minimal wages] in China or Indonesia, or wherever the heck it is, is essentially because there is an army controlling the people, and the people say, 'Well, we want a higher wage.' Well, they get shot," states Finberg.

3:30 p.m.

Faizel Rawji, an education student at UBC, ponders the Fraser Institute over a bite to eat: "I think it's a good resource. I use it. I use it as one perspective. Of course, it is knowingly right wing, which is fine, there's no problem with that, as long as you know both sides. The problem that I have with this forum is that it is one perspective. There's no argument, or not an educated perspective argument...if you know a lot about the issue, and you know both sides, you're realizing that only one side is being addressed."

Source: The Ubyssy

The McGill Daily



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Dental Surgeon/Chirurgien Dentiste

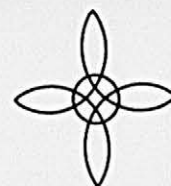
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A CASE FOR PRAGMATIC SOLIDARITY

by Darrell Tan

Farmer addresses inequalities in health care

Last November, medical anthropologist and physician Paul Farmer of Harvard University delivered an engaging lecture entitled "Readjustment in the Periphery: The case for Pragmatic Solidarity". Drawing on his extensive fieldwork and clinical work experience in rural Haiti and additional research in Peru, Farmer gave a compelling critical reflection on the nature of social suffering and its relation to broader forces of transnationalism.

Farmer opened his discussion with the medical case history of a man in a Boston hospital admitted with a bad case of tuberculosis. Standard drug treatments, which generally involve combination therapy with antibiotics, were of little benefit, suggesting that his illness was due to a strain of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* carrying genetic resistance to these drugs. Such cases of multiple drug resistant tuberculosis, or MDRTB, have been increasing in frequency at an alarming rate in recent years. According to Farmer, three million people worldwide died of tuberculosis in 1996 alone. The man's case was further investigated as caregivers tried to figure out how he had gotten sick - where or from whom he had contracted the disease - a practice known as contact tracing. He had recently returned from Carabayllo, a poor area in the vicinity of Lima, Peru. According to Farmer, it is no small coincidence that the man had picked up the disease in an impoverished region. Farmer's research underscores how broad scale phenomena related to public health, macroeconomics and politics impose a systematic disadvantage on poor populations and predispose them to potentially fatal infections, putting a new twist on the old saying: the rich get richer, and the poor get poorer. In this case, the poor are also getting sicker.

ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE

The widespread use of antibiotics during the middle of this century introduced a spirit of intense optimism in the field of public health. Experts imagined a complete triumph over infectious diseases and a 'health transition' in which attention could shift to other aspects of health besides fighting strep throat. In recent years, however, the emergence of drug resistance among bacteria - like that described for MDRTB - has sounded an alarm over the 'crisis in antibiotic resistance'.

The biological explanation for resistance is that bacteria exposed to a drug may evolve mechanisms for evading their bactericidal effects. A properly administered regimen of antibiotics normally kills the organisms before they can do this, but improper use allows some bacteria to survive and develop resistance.

Peruvian public health authorities claim to have controlled this problem in the case of tuberculosis, citing studies by the Pan-American Health Organization which report a much higher prevalence of MDRTB in Northwestern parts of the continent - Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela - than in Peru. Local experts attribute their presumed success over the resistance crisis to a program called 'DOTS' - directly observed therapy, short-course. The argument goes that by directly observing the ingestion of medicines by patients, health practitioners can be certain that improper use of antibiotics is not happening and creating a breeding ground for resistant strains.

In studying the situation in Carabayllo, however, it became clear to Farmer that MDRTB strains are indeed circulating in the general population. He denounced the attitude of public health authorities who are blind to this problem, caricaturing their reliance on "MDR weather reports which forecast raining MDR in Colombia and Venezuela but sunny skies over resistance-free Peru". Microbes are blind to national borders, as the Bostonian man's case clearly shows. By ignoring this problem and continuing to treat all tuberculosis cases under the DOTS program, Farmer argues, doctors may in fact be allowing the spread of MDRTB to continue unabated. In a morning lecture at the Montreal General Hospital, Farmer further extended his criticism to the international public health community, which has lauded programs such as DOTS while failing to see the weaknesses and ineffectiveness of them.

BLIND TO THE SOCIAL

Farmer's second, and perhaps more important critique of public health practice is its blindness to social factors which fuel health problems among disadvantaged populations. Indeed, it is well documented that poverty fuels drug resistance as the inaccessibility of treatment spawns the development of black market trade in antibiotics. This obviously leads to their unregulated usage.

The role of poverty is also revealed in Farmer's analysis of prioritization among public health authorities. In addition to the flawed argument that MDRTB is not a problem in Peru, another argument underlying the country's continuing disregard for these cases is the rhetoric of 'cost effectiveness'. Implementing new, albeit expensive, programs to address multiply drug resistant infections in addition to the DOTS program for the general population is not considered economically

Western institutions, which may not be appropriate for many environments, and too often prioritize economic aspects of development over 'human' or 'social' development.

Charity is the second discourse often employed in addressing social suffering, and

Farmer concedes that it is perhaps "not such a bad thing to say that 'I have a lot, they don't have a lot, so I should share'". It's not profound, but I think the question we're really asking ourselves in the latter twenti-

mentioned in the lecture's title, and to co-found the organization Partners in Health (PIH), dedicated to furthering this ideal. According to a PIH brochure, "People living in poverty seldom need outside help to identify the nature of their problems. What they lack are the material resources to address them. For these reasons, we regard our task as primarily a pragmatic one. Through 'pragmatic solidarity' with our partners, our goals are to improve the health of the poor and their commu-



worthwhile. Yet curiously - or perhaps obviously - the people who suffer most from this decision are those with the least socioeconomic status in society. Expensive programs like DOTS are introduced, when what is really needed is a reliable health care system with an emphasis on prevention and health care, as opposed to attacking diseases once they have taken root.

POTENTIAL DIRECTIONS

Farmer's lecture closed with a comparison of three potential discourses for approaching illness, poverty and other social problems. His criticism of the first of these, the discourse of development, is supported by a significant body of literature wary of the ethnocentric, colonialist and ahistorical attitudes traditionally embodied by international development initiatives. Development theory and practice are founded on

eth century is, 'how bad is it?' Charity is related to pity and false assumptions - most notably the assumption that the intended recipient of charity is powerless and dependent on aid. According to Farmer, "It's not getting at the root of inequality, and it's not radically redistributing wealth in the world so that people don't need charity again and again; it's got a lot of shortcomings".

The solution, Farmer suggests, may ultimately lie within a third paradigm - that of social justice. Put simply, "Social justice means that we're going to acknowledge that the world is a pretty screwed up place". This attitude embraces the themes Farmer discussed in his talk - examining root causes, uncovering linkages between individuals' suffering and macro-scale forces, and listening to people's voices.

This attitude towards social justice has led Farmer to develop the concept of 'pragmatic solidarity'

nities, foster active community involvement... and expose the structures that create vast disparities in access to medical care".

OPTIMISM FOR AN ONGOING STRUGGLE

Asked whether he sees an end to the continuing struggles for social justice, Farmer was quick to say, 'no'. But in the face of impressive barriers, he remains optimistic. "Salvation is in struggling for human dignity," Farmer asserts. "That's how we save ourselves at the end of the twentieth century - by saying no, we do not accept inequality, we do not accept enriching ourselves at the expense of others". The potential to resist, he argues is in everyone: "There's a potential legion of people out there that we can call to this cause". Perhaps the greatest struggle, then, lies in the calling.

Cannot let them reduce me to Hate

Son of the Reverend Dr. Martin
Luther King Comes to Montréal



by Jonathan Wexler

Martin Luther King The Third, son of assassinated civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., came to Montréal over the weekend of November 9th to speak at several venues, including for the Black Coalition of Québec. King is currently set to take over the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization founded by his father, which works with groups, lawyers, and media to secure rights for those without them.

When he came to speak at the Sha'ar Shomayim synagogue, the crux of King's speech was the continued struggle against all hate and injustice. King said that his father

was killed on his last mission which was to help the garbage workers gain respect and better working conditions. It is a little known fact that his grandmother was killed as well. A man walked in and shot her while she was playing organ music at church.

He said that he was ten when his father was assassinated and when his grandfather said "Daddy has gone to be with God now and we will see him again. That was enough for me." King recalled his grandfather's passionate words, "I refuse to let anyone reduce me to hatred, it is just too much for one to bear," both after his son was assassinated

and his grandmother. He added that "My grandmother & grandfather taught me about love."

King expanded on the tactics of non-violence that must be used and were used during the Civil Rights Movement. He said that "Human-kind has got to learn that human beings should be treated with love... My father emanated a philosophy of love; to the poor, to those who have no voice." King also spoke of the importance of not forgetting the simple things, like having your family teach you how to fish, which luckily he was able to learn from them.

Martin Luther King III said that

after his father's assassination: "I certainly could have come of age in bitterness." He repeated the words of his grandfather "I refuse to let myself be reduced to hatred, the cost of hatred is too much for me to bear." He also said that his family taught him about the four loves: To love oneself, to love your family, to love your community and your God. He said there is another sort of love beyond these four. "A love that seeks nothing in return."

Perhaps Martin Luther King Jr., a man shot for standing up for his convictions of giving the silenced a voice, lives on through his son's words: "We must allow our con-

science to be the thing that guides us." King III stressed that his leadership will help the situation.

Martin Luther King III is working diligently to get James Earl Ray, the man in jail for his father's murder, out of jail. He believes Ray was simply the fall guy for what really was a coordinated assassination which went up all the way to the highest ranks of government.

According to a book by Jay Epstein, "Inquest; the Warren Commission and the Establishment of Truth," Kennedy's death was the result of the extreme right wing, the same forces being tied to Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination.

Shapiro's new vision continued from pg. 1

... McGill. The 25 point restructuring plan called for "substantially higher tuition fees," lower enrollment and "a more decentralized McGill in which only faculties capable of generating the revenues required to sustain them would be supported." That vision of the university was countered with Making McGill, a student-based response document which argued that academic innovation, accessibility, and curriculum diversity would be bargained away if privatization was pursued.

Shapiro acknowledges that the option to privatize is closely

modeled after Towards A New McGill and concedes that vigorous opposition leveled two years ago makes the option unlikely. A summary of the Board-Senate discussion also reveals shaky support for privatization.

Matthew Bergbusch, President of the Post Graduate Students' Society, notes an alarming trend in the administration's response to collapsing provincial grants - a consistent move towards privatization in the face of student opposition. "The situation is dealt with by the administration where excellence is defined as the capacity to be economi-

cally self-supporting," he pointed out, "We would maintain that a university that is not diverse or accessible is not an excellent university. A university where tuition fees rise is not an excellent university," he said.

Bergbusch is sharply critical of the prospect of privatization, he describes the third option, which has garnered the most support from the Board as the other side of the same coin. "We definitely prefer the third option but we are completely opposed to raising tuition fees, even marginally," he stated.

"We're really being given no option here," agreed Tara Newell,

President of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU). "The options are portrayed as being very bleak...The principal framed the discussion that way and all of the options are about increasing tuition," she said.

Part of the problem, according to Newell, is the marginal role given to students in the decision-making process. "Most of those present at the meeting would benefit by tuition fees going up," she said.

Students represent only 20 seats on the 150 member Senate-Board, and are heavily outweighed by corporate representation. Newell is

currently working in conjunction with the PGSS to push for increased student representation on the Board of Governors, where talks of privatization are still simmering.

"There's not a lot of support for it at the Board level right now," Shapiro reported. "I could imagine being forced into it [privatization] rather than continuously undercut the university."

"I would like there to be more discussion on external strategies, such as lobbying the provincial government," Newell suggested. "The government is starving the university and we need to look at that in a big picture kind of way."

SSMU reforms continued from pg. 1

...Chief Returning Officer (CRO) to have more power. Previously there were no provisions in the By Laws whereby the CRO could reprimand candidates. Now the CRO has the right to refuse reimbursement to any candidate for any infractions of the constitution and the by-laws. The CRO can now also disqualify any candidate prior to the elections depending on the severity of the offence.

Newell was particularly satisfied with the restriction on campaigning in the libraries. The new regulation does not allow for paper campaign material to be distributed or affixed in classrooms or within the theft security perimeters of McGill libraries. "Candidates will not be permitted

to go up to students studying in the libraries and disturb them by asking them to vote for the candidate," said Newell.

One of the biggest achievements for Newell was article 7.15 which stated that no candidate may send unsolicited electronic mail for the purposes of campaigning. "I like that one for a couple of reasons. I was harassed last year through e-mail and it was right in the middle of elections. E-mails are supposed to be confidential," said Newell. The resolution also prevents candidates from having an unfair advantage by getting e-mail lists of clubs.

Although a motion was made in Council to disallow the use of handbills, that motion failed. Newell ex-

plained that it creates a more personal atmosphere wherein the candidate can personally inform the voter of his or her platform. It was a concern that with all the restrictions, the elections might lose their importance. "What will next year's council look like if no one knows what is going on," questioned Muldoon.

Article 7.4.5, which stated that Candidates are responsible for the removal of all posters before the opening of regular polls also raised debate. While it was felt that certain candidates might unintentionally forget to take certain posters off, it could be looked at as an infraction of the by-laws. Anne Topolski, Senate and Board representative to

Council said, "the issue should be intent. If we have faith in the candidates to run our school we should have faith in them to remove the posters." The debate ended by removing the word 'all' from the proposed by-law.

Another question raised was where candidates were allowed to put up posters. It was proposed that posters can only be put up indoors on McGill campus. "My concern is litter. Candidates will put up posters in places where students will be and this requires for a liberalization of the rule as is," said Jeff Anders, Management representative to Council. After that the words 'on McGill campus' were stricken.

Candidates will also not be al-

lowed to distribute food or any gifts in kind for the purposes of campaigning.

After last year's elections the newly elected executive had unanimously agreed that campaigning regulations needed drastic changes. "We (the executive) all vowed to make changes to the electoral procedures," said Newell.

"I think it is about time that election regulations have undergone changes and Council has responded favourably," said Muldoon. Whether or not candidates adhere to these regulations remains to be seen but previous elections and SSMU council meetings have proved time and time again that rules are meant to be broken.

UNIVERSITIES TAG ALONG FOR TEAM CANADA RIDE

UNIVERSITIES TAG ALONG

Source: The Varsity

BY MEG MURPHY

TORONTO (CUP)— As a whirlwind of networking and deal-making sweeps through Latin America, eager representatives of Canadian higher education are doing their best to secure a piece of the action. Eighteen universities are participating in the two-week trade mission to Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico currently underway, which has been dubbed 'Team Canada' by the Liberal government. They are acting as third-string players beside Canadian business and the federal and provincial governments in a fierce competition to posit our innocuous nation as a leader in the emerging global economy. The trade mission comes as a pre-cursor to a free trade agreement with the Americas (excluding Cuba), scheduled to be signed in April.

According to a spokesperson from the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, the jaunt enables the sectors to promote a common goal. According to Karen McBride, "all are vying for prosperous trade relations with Latin America."

"Canadian businesses have a real

interest in expanding into Latin America," she said. "And it is Canadian universities' mandate to prepare students to operate in an environment which is now global."

This mission is the fourth annual networking bonanza organized by the federal government. In past years the destination has always been somewhere in Asia - first China, then South East Asia, and most recently the Philippines, Korea and Thailand.

McBride says post-secondary participation in this mission will enable Canada to throw a touch of warmth into the climate of budding business liaisons, making Canadian ties to Latin America that much stronger.

"It is not just about economics, it is about building bonds by understanding each other's cultures," she said, adding collaborative projects and student exchanges will accomplish this goal.

"Building partnerships with educational institutions in the mission's four pit stops is one main goal. It will both help trade relations and promote international diversity on Ca-

nadian campuses," says McBride.

An aspect of these blossoming relations will be student recruitment, which is highly profitable for Canadian universities since foreign students are often charged three times what domestic students pay.

Four Canadian Education Centres will be opened for this purpose. They will be located in Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Venezuela. Prior to this mission, the only Canadian recruitment centre in Latin America was located in Mexico. The other primary incentive for the education sector to participate in the mission is the thrill of developing more partnerships with Canadian businesses in the process, she says.

But as higher-education officials are swept into the free-trade frenzy, some argue they are joining a business-heavy team that has paid little heed to the societal threats of this game.

Ricardo Grinspun, director of the Centre for Research on Latin American and Caribbean Studies at York University, says serious oversights must be addressed. He says universities should look at the types of col-

laborations they are carving, as well as the ethics of those around them.

"One thing is very worrisome. A lot of these contacts are being started around business-university linkages. To what extent are these university links established around a business agenda and to what extent are they established around academic priorities?" he questioned.

On Jan. 13 in Mexico City, Canadian businesses and educational institutions signed 91 new business deals worth \$229.9-million. This marked the largest number of deals signed at one time on a team mission.

"There is a clear trade-business agenda here. Unfortunately, this arrangement has not been shaped up taking into account the societal implications of these connections in terms of how they will impact Canada and Latin America," Grinspun said.

But McBride says universities, for their part, will encourage Latin American countries to address some of these social issues through collaborative courses.

"From the universities' perspec-

tive, academic cooperation allows you to work with these countries around areas of concern, like environmental and human rights issues," she said. "It is through sharing expertise that we can make improvements."

Several key universities decided not to take part in the Team Canada trade mission this year. These include York University, University of Victoria, Concordia University, Dalhousie University, University of British Columbia and the University of New Brunswick.

Of those contacted, several suggested that scheduling problems prevented them from attending, particularly because the government did not provide adequate notice of the trip's timing.

A few also candidly admitted their interests in foreign student recruitment is centred in Asia, while others delivered a rather interesting version of the two.

"It was just a matter of timing," a public relations officer at UBC, said. "We have participated in past Team Asia, I mean Team Canada trips before."

Source: The Manitoban

Aboriginal peoples find gov't response to Royal Commission report disappointing

mission on Aboriginal Peoples.

Stewart apologized for the government's historic mistreatment of aboriginal people, placing specific emphasis on the physical and sexual abuse many suffered at Canada's residential schools.

Stewart also announced the establishment of a \$350-million fund to help victims of the residential school system.

"[The schools] left legacies of personal pain and distress that continue to reverberate in aboriginal communities to this day," she said.

Canada's residential school system was established at the beginning of the century as part of a federal assimilation policy, which was intended, according to then-Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs Duncan Campbell Scott, to "continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question, and no Indian department."

By the 1940s, approximately 8,000 aboriginal children were enrolled in residential schools, which continued to operate until the 1950s and 1960s, when students were gradually transferred to provincial schools.

The residential school system has since gained public notoriety following revelations of physical and sexual abuse of children, suppression of aboriginal languages and traditional practices and mandatory residential-school attendance enforced by the Department of Indian Affairs,

even over the wishes of parents.

"Let this moment mark the end of paternalism in our relations and the beginning of empowerment of first peoples," First Nations Grand Chief Phil Fontaine, who accepted Stewart's apology, said.

But other aboriginal leaders present at the apology ceremony dismissed the government's response, citing its various inadequacies.

The statement failed to recognize Metis or Inuit peoples, Gerald Morin, president of the Metis National Council, said.

"Our people are not going to be satisfied with the response we've had today," he said.

The government's response was also criticized for being far weaker than the apology offered by the Mulroney government to Japanese-Canadians interned during the Second World War.

There are also concerns that the response barely scratched the surface of the recommendations issued in the Royal Commission report. And ironically, some say the federal government ignored one of the underlying precepts of the commission's report when it developed its response.

Paul Chartrand, a commission member and a former professor of Aboriginal studies at the University of Manitoba, says the government should have consulted more with aboriginal people on its response and the policies which emanated from it.

"The main criticism is [the government's] failure to follow a guiding principle for policy that our report urges, which is never to develop policy without the participation of aboriginal peoples. Unfortunately that happened and that's why you saw some disappointment expressed," he said.

Chartrand adds commission members were expecting something more substantial from the government in its response, to signify the turning of a new page in aboriginal-government relations.

"The royal proclamation that [the commission] envisioned was one that would be given by the Queen's representative, the Governor General, and perhaps ideally, by the Queen herself, to add that symbolism. [A]nd it would be accompanied by some real, institutional change," he said.

Eric Robinson, a member of the Manitoba legislature, says the apology should have come from Prime Minister Jean Chrétien himself.

"If we're to hear a true apology, it should have come from the Prime Minister, a Prime Minister who tried to assimilate us into Canadian society," he said.

In 1969, when Chrétien was Indian Affairs Minister, his department released a controversial white paper which proposed stripping aboriginal peoples of their treaty status to facilitate assimilation into the Canadian mainstream.

OTTAWA (CUP) — The federal government has formally apologized for decades of assimilation efforts and abuse suffered by aboriginal peoples as a result of official government policies.

Indian Affairs Minister Jane Stewart made the announcement Jan. 8, in a much-anticipated response to the 4,000-page report released last year by the Royal Com-

Trent TA's launch union drive

Administrators claim that organization is unnecessary

Source: The Arthur

PETERBOROUGH (CUP) – Student employees of Trent University demanded job security, adequate wages and good working conditions as they kicked off their drive to unionize.

The Trent Academic Assistants Workers Committee announced the beginning of a unionization drive for Trent's teaching assistants, research assistants, lab monitors and markers Jan. 6.

Student workers, most of whom are graduate students, are the only non-unionized employees at Trent.

"As non-unionized employees, we're in a dangerous position in light of the recent wave of attacks on universities by the government and corporate sectors," Alex Levant, a member of the committee, said.

As members of a union, the student workers would be able to negotiate a collective agreement which would formally establish the rights and obligations of both employer and employees. Student academic assistants at 10 of Ontario's 17 universities are unionized, while union drives are underway at two more, Brock University and Queen's University.

According to Daria Ivanodhko, a national representative for the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), there has been a marked increase in the number of inquiries about unionizing academic workers in the last few months.

She says people are increasingly concerned about job security and working conditions as more and more funding is cut from post-secondary institutions.

"My job as a TA is crucial to me. I need that money to complete my studies," Morgan Gay, a graduate student and TA at Trent, said. "But with all the cuts to education, everything is threatened and because we are not unionized we are the most vulnerable."

Val Patrick, business agent for CUPE local 3903 at York and 3908 at Trent, echoes Gay's concerns.

"Especially in this political climate and this time of squeezing, if you don't have an organized collective voice you'll get squeezed out," she said.

Union members at other university campuses say organization is helping to protect them in these tough times.

"Last year the administration wanted huge rollbacks. If we hadn't been organized we would have had our pay decreased, we would have lost our job security and many of our benefits," Andrew Gray, a student teaching assistant at the University of Toronto and

treasurer of CUPE local 3902, said.

Unionized student academic workers have even managed to make gains recently. At York University, negotiations resulted in a drug and dental plan, guaranteed annual wages of approximately \$9,500 and a guaranteed number of years of paid work.

But Trent administrators don't seem to feel that there is a strong need for student academic assistants to organize.

"I disagree strongly that [they] are so vulnerable," Paul Healy, dean of research and graduate studies at Trent, said. He adds that student academic workers are highly valued by the university.

Healy says he is skeptical about the success of the unionization drive. He adds that organi-

"Graduate students will need to consider the pros and cons.... Although unionizing can simplify negotiation processes, labour unrest can also occur."

zation can lead to labour unrest, pointing to the fact that there have been two faculty strikes at Trent in the past six years.

"Graduate students will need to con-

sider the pros and cons.... Although unionizing can simplify negotiation processes, labour unrest can also occur," he said.

But members of the organizing committee remain undeterred. They have already launched an information campaign and over the next month will be collecting signatures from interested student academic workers.

"We need to protect ourselves," Gay said.

Acadia students up in arms over stalled contract talks

Source: The Athenaeum

WOLFVILLE (CUP) – With negotiations heading nowhere fast, students at Acadia University are bracing for a faculty strike.

But they aren't taking the looming strike sitting down. Or are they?

On Jan. 12, hundreds of students occupied the main administrative building on the Nova Scotia campus and held a sit-in to express their displeasure with the current state of contract negotiations between administration and faculty.

Talks are currently at a standstill. A provincially-appointed conciliator had been called in earlier this month to help the two sides reach an agreement, but left after just two days.

The highlight of the sit-in was a two-and-a-half hour question period during which Acadia president Kelvin Ogilvie and faculty association president Jim Sacouman fielded questions from students.

"I think the students were really pleased about the forum," Paul Black, president of Acadia's student union, said. "They got to ask the questions they wanted to ask, and they got to ask them to the people the way [they] wanted to."

During the emotionally-charged forum, however, there were signs of frustration among the students as the two presidents belittled each other.

One student asked how they could stand there and expect to be taken seriously while virtually laughing at each other, and there were repeated calls from the audience for the two to "grow up."

The faculty is calling for a five per cent raise retroactive to last

November and in each of the next two years. The administration is only willing to give faculty the five per cent retroactive raise, with smaller increases in each of the next two years. There is also disagreement over the language of the new contract.

Acadia students have taken other actions to encourage the two sides to sit down and work out their differences. Many have formally refused to pay their tuition this semester, and some are sporting red and blue ribbons to protest the stalled talks.

Black has announced that if the situation is not resolved soon, the student union will call for the resignations of both Ogilvie and Sacouman.

"Having allowed the situation to escalate to this point, it is apparent that neither is capable of competently holding their position," Black said.

While Ogilvie refused comment on the matter, Sacouman said, "If it were seen to contribute to the negotiations, I will resign immediately at the same time that

Kelvin Ogilvie resigns as president of the university."

Black also announced that if a strike or lockout occurs, the student union will pursue legal action against both parties.

Student frustration is being exacerbated by a work-to-rule action that was launched by Acadia faculty at the beginning of the month. Professors are refusing to take part in the Acadia Advantage, a program through which students use laptop computers as a major learning tool.

Students in the program, who now number over 1,400, pay an extra \$1,200 on top of their regular tuition and are issued a laptop computer. Using the computer and one of the myriad network connections found in Acadia's classrooms, residence rooms and common areas, students can download material provided by their professors, access class notes found on web sites or join with others in chat groups.

Sacouman says professors have not received pay for helping to make the Acadia Advantage program a reality. Other faculty say they are participating in the job action to drive home the fact that they should have the choice as to whether or not they will use computer technology in their classrooms.

Acadia faculty will hold a strike vote in late January or early February.



SSMU "ICEBOX" Assistance Fund Responding to "Ice Storm '98"

SSMU is providing assistance to McGill students who lost food as a result of the "Great Ice Storm" of '98

Application forms are available at the SSMU front desk

Students tackle reform of governing bodies

Reforms demanded across Canada

VICTORIA (CUP) – Two years ago, David Gratzner felt like he was being pushed around. As one of three student members of the Board of Governors at the University of Manitoba, it was his distinct impression that the student voice was not being heard on the school's highest decision-making body. He found that his vote, on things like tuition hikes and teaching assistant salaries, was consistently in opposition to the rest of the board. And while that could be attributed to individual point of view, Gratzner saw it differently.

It became clear to him that, particularly as tuition fees were increasing and students were paying a larger share of the university budget than ever before, there needed to be greater student representation on the board to bring across the student perspective.

There were 26 seats in total on the U of M board, giving students just over 11 per cent representation. Gratzner and others pushed for this to change, and the provincial government listened. In May 1997 the Manitoba University Act was amended to include three more students on the board.

"I think now the students have more say, and their concerns are brought up more often," Gratzner said. "It took a lot of work, but we got it through."

Now others are joining in the call for more students on the governing bodies of Canadian universities and colleges. The undergraduate student union at McGill University, for example, is calling for more student representatives on its school's Board of Governors and its subcommittees.

"Unfortunately, due to a lack of representation on [board] subcommittees, which are crucial to students, we don't always have adequate representation to deal with student issues," Carrie Goldstein, who represents the student union on the board, said.

And the request isn't falling on deaf ears. Richard Pound, chair of the McGill Board of Governors, says what students are asking for is fair. "[It] is a pretty reasonable request [and] one with which I have considerable sympathy," he said.

But not all student leaders are convinced that increasing student membership on governing bodies is the panacea that others seem to feel it is.

At the University of Victoria, where students hold two out of 15 seats on the school's highest decision-making body, there have been no efforts to lobby the provincial government to change the Board of Governor's composition. Though British Columbia's post-secondary education system is heading for rocky times, with rising enrolments and a crush of people on waiting lists, Victoria student leaders don't see any use in increasing student representation on the board.

Matt Pollard, one of the two students currently on the UVic board, argues increased representation would be useless because student say has little or no effect on board decisions. "People listen patiently, they tell us they're considering what we've said, but I haven't seen it really change any decision," he said. "Our presence there is pretty token, in a way."

Establishing credibility with other board members is the largest hurdle facing student representatives on governing bodies, explains Theresa Sabourin, who was a student rep on UVic's board last year. "As a student representative on [the board] you spend a lot of time and energy trying to figure out how best to be credible and taken seriously, and have your perspective really influence a decision."

Pollard points as an example of this to the reaction he received after bringing a proposal for an ethical investment policy to the board last year. He raised the issue after learning that UVic had Shell Oil shares in its investment portfolio. Shell has come under fire for operating in Nigeria, which is ruled by a corrupt and murderous regime.

"I don't think the university felt the issue was clear enough to it to make a decision," Pollard said. "Whereas to students, I think generally the issue is much clearer and there would be less reluctance to say, 'Sure, we can't scrutinize everything, but one thing we're not going to do is invest in Shell.'"

Pollard says the decision not to pursue an ethical investment policy clearly indicates how students perceive issues differently than administrators and how the student view on the board is often dismissed as idealistic. He adds that other board members often take the stance that student representatives do not see the fiscal re-

"People listen patiently, they tell us they're considering what we've said, but I haven't seen it really change any decision," he said. "Our presence there is pretty token, in a way."

ality of the university from a practical perspective.

"I think right now in terms of balance, right now the balance is tipped to the side of fiscal rhetoric. Usually idealistic points of view are just based on someone else's reality," he said.

Erg Mitchell, one of two faculty members on the UVic board, says members simply unconvinced by Pollard's argument for an ethical investment policy. "On that issue, one can tend to be philosophical about these things, but practically speaking, I tend to put the money where the best rates come from, regardless."

And David Strong, president of UVic, disagrees with the students' description of futility on the board. He says all board members are equal, adding that a large number of student initiatives are accepted by the body. "I'd be willing to bet that if you looked at the last five years, where students propose things to the board, 90 per cent plus of their motions are supported."

But Strong does acknowledge that it's common for board members, students or otherwise, to occasionally feel frustration with the board and the decision it makes. No member has the ability to swing a vote, he points out. "Nobody's views are implemented consistently and constantly on the board. In a democratic setting, you can never predict how people are going to vote."

But while disillusioned students in Victoria turn their back on reforming their institution's main governing body, the push for increased student representation on university boards continues in earnest in other parts of the country.

At Memorial University in Newfoundland, as student tuition has come to cover approximately 30 per cent of the university's budget, calls for more student reps on the Board of Regents have intensified. And Memorial president, Art May, is amenable to the

idea.

But Brad Lavigne, chair of the Canadian Federation of Students, while supportive of more student representation on university and college governing bodies, says students must be careful of the rationale they use to bolster the number of seats they hold.

He says simply using the equation that those who pay more, get more seats, could leave students with some very interesting counterparts on the governing bodies, namely wealthy individuals and representatives of rich corporations who have made donations to the institutions.

"[With that reasoning], [t]hose who are well off, who can donate enough, get an amount of say," Lavigne said. "They could buy influence over the institution."

He adds that students shouldn't expend too much of their energy fighting for more representation on university and college governing bodies. Lavigne says reform efforts should be focused on the federal and provincial governments, where the major decisions for the post-secondary sector, such as tuition and funding levels, are made.

"These have the biggest impact on the affordability and accessibility of education," Lavigne said.

With files from the Muse

There are positions open on the Daily's editorial board.

These include:

-coordinating culture editor

-news editor

-copy editors (2)

-layout coordinator

Submit nominations in the envelope on the front board in the office, Shatner B-03, by Thursday, January 29, at 17h00.

Alternative budget released

Students and faculty answer Principal's challenge

by Sonia Verma

Last April when 18 students staged a surprise occupation of Principal Bernard Shapiro's office to protest increased student fees, Shapiro countered with a challenge: Come up with an alternative way to absorb government cuts without hiking tuition.

A broad coalition of students, faculty and non-academic staff took him up, releasing McGill's first Alternative Budget last week. "The university community has always been told that there is no alternative," commented Anna Kruzynski, who spearheaded the project. "We needed to learn about the financial details so that we could come up with some concrete proposals."

According to Eric Shragge, a professor of Social Work who participated in the project, the consultative process which went into the drafting of the Alternative Budget sharply diverges from the administration's approach. "There are a bunch of values and assumptions within any budget. We wanted to make our values and assumptions explicit and available for public scrutiny."

The 25-page document steers clear of tuition fee increases and cuts to academic programs. Instead of focusing on the university as the target of cuts, the Alternative Budget points to McGill's existing assets to generate revenue.

A major proposal involves funneling the interest realized on McGill's \$500 million endowment fund investments into university operations. Last year, a "Special Contribution" of \$1.9 million went towards reducing the university's debt. The Alternative Budget argues that money is misdirected, and should instead offset rising tuition, operations, and wages for non-academic staff.

"The money should be used to lessen or remove the financial burden on students and bring back wage parity for non-academic staff to bring them in line with staff of other Quebec universities," said Kruzynski. Other ideas include selling off some of the university's undisclosed investment properties and eliminating "double-dipping" - where

professors over the age of 69 currently receive both a salary and a full pension.

The timing of the Alternative Budget has proven crucial. In a Joint Board and Senate meeting last November, talks of McGill's fiscal options, members rallied a plan to raise tuition to \$3200 and build closer ties with the corporate sector as a solution to McGill's budgetary shortfall.

This "Quality-Driven" option has been criticized by the Post-Graduate Students' Society as a threat to accessible education. "Students don't need to incur that much of a financial burden. It excludes students from getting an education" declared Matthew Bergbusch, PGSS President.

Kruzynski maintains the debate around McGill's fiscal future has been framed to exclude other options.

"Shapiro always says increasing fees is the only option, therefore it is seen as the only option," she said.

Allan Youster, President of MUNACA, the union of non-academic staff at McGill, became involved with the Alternative Budget to challenge McGill's closed-door policy of budget-making.

"I was really interested in the transparency of the Alternative Budget and the democratization of the process," he explained. He is doubtful, however, that the administration will consider the proposals without significant public pressure.

Shapiro, meanwhile, doesn't perceive a problem with the existing process of financial decision-making at McGill. "The business of students at the university is to study. The business of faculty is to teach and to do research," he said. "I don't think that under the name of democracy, you can usefully meet and sensibly say that the business of students is to create the budget."

The Alternative budget is still in draft form, intended for public discussion and debate, regardless of whether the administration is listening. Following community input, a final document is hoped to be presented to McGill's Board of Governors for consideration.

daily classifieds

Ads may be placed through the Daily Business Office, Room B-07, University Centre, 9h00-14h00. Deadline is 14h00, two working days prior to publication. McGill Students & Staff (with valid ID): \$4.65 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, \$4.10 per day. General Public: \$5.90 per day, or \$4.95 per day for 3 or more consecutive days. Extra charges may apply, prices include applicable GST or PST. Full payment should accompany your advertising order and may be made in cash or by personal cheque (for amounts over \$20 only). For more information, please visit our office or call 398-6790. WE CANNOT TAKE CLASSIFIED ADS OVER THE PHONE. PLEASE CHECK YOUR AD CAREFULLY WHEN IT APPEARS IN THE PAPER. The Daily assumes no financial responsibility for errors, or damages due to errors. Ad will re-appear free of charge upon request if information is incorrect due to our error. The Daily reserves the right not to print any classified ad.

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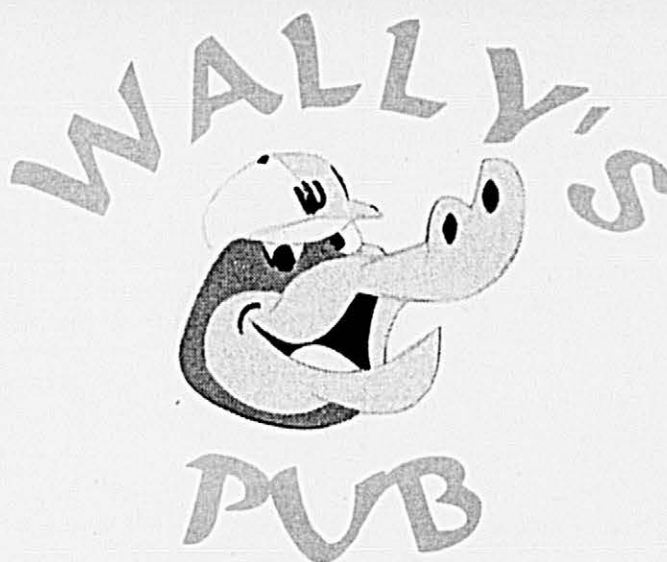
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